

INNER HEALING

The Rev. Canon Dr. Sandi Kerner

Kinds of healing: Physical healing (most often we think “physical” when we think of healing), spiritual healing, emotional or inner healing, deliverance from evil, generational healing, relational healing – often many are inter-related.

Focus on Inner Healing (emotional healing, healing of memories, healing the child within):

Wounds from suffering, sin, and illness because we are fallen and we live in a fallen world; wounds from trauma (inflicted by others); self-inflicted (sin); or, a lack of love or nurture.

“Of all the kinds of healing, inner healing touches on our deepest suffering – that of the heart, the mind and inner core of our being. When we have been deeply wounded through these past experiences, we carry the memories of these experiences and the feelings associated with them... [Our beliefs about ourselves, God and others, and our identity are all shaped by what we infer from these experiences.] In contrast to the strengthening and life-giving effects of positive memories, painful memories can damage the emotions, crippling and binding us in our personal, emotional, and spiritual lives. Unless God heals us in our areas of brokenness, we will not live and grow into people that God has created us to be (the True Self), but, rather, we will live as prisoners trapped in the bondage of our deep wounds. Inner healing is God’s way of healing and liberating us from our brokenness and the deepest wounds of the heart.” (*School of Healing Prayer, Level I, p. 105, Christian Healing Ministries, Judith MacNutt*).

Elephant story

Judith MacNutt’s article on Inner Healing (psychotherapist, practitioner, and teacher of healing prayer)

“After many years of individual and group counseling with people who exhibit varying degrees of emotional health, I have come to believe that **a deficiency in love** is at the heart of most of our trouble. The greatest longing of our hearts is to be in union, to love and to be loved, [to know and be known]. God has created us in [God’s] divine image, and [God] desires union with us; therefore, our hearts cannot be at rest until this desire for union with God is satisfied.

In some mysterious way, when I asked Jesus to heal the destructive aspects of my patients’ past, it would happen. Sometimes [Jesus] would even appear to the person [within the memory]. In other words, prayer really can change our lives. This method of prayer has been named inner healing, the healing of the heart, or the healing of memories. Through inner healing, God goes into those regions we cannot reach and does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. God can truly heal and transform our painful life experiences, allowing us to be free from the bondage of unexplored memories. Things seemingly forgotten have the potential of becoming a great source of harm. These secrets of the soul dwell in the darkness of our shame. These crushing, painful memories can rise up to destroy us in body, mind, and spirit. We may be able to survive with broken bodies but not with broken spirits: “The human spirit will endure sickness; but a broken spirit—who can bear?” (Proverbs 18:14, NRSV). In the process of inner healing, our wounded memories become a source of healing. In order to bring about that change, we must uncover those root memories—something effectively achieved through traditional psychotherapy.

But what I discovered is that through prayer we can then drain those memories of their poison through the healing love of Jesus. Once we identify the pain and bring it into the light, Jesus can transform it and free us from its crippling effects. [Jesus] doesn’t erase the memory, but he does remove the

devastating effect of the memory. After prayer we can still remember what happened, but the memory no longer has its old power over us.”

The capacity to trust arises out of feeling loved and being secure in that love.

Another excellent article:

[How I Discovered Inner Healing - Christian Healing Ministries](#) (by Judith MacNutt)

Factors indicating a need for inner healing:

When we become aware we are held down in any way by the hurts of the past, with results such as unreasonable fear, anxiety, compulsion, feelings of worthlessness, overreactions (e.g., anger, rage, terror, performance anxiety, scrupulosity), rejection, abandonment, self-hatred, shame, critical spirit, negative self-image, resentment, unforgiveness, inferiority, etc. Or, a lack of love, acceptance, nurture, affirmation, care (often through neglect or because of absence). Or, holding a distorted image of God.

Reflect on this list and ask God to show you where these took hold of or influenced your life.

We erect protective shields or structures around these wounds – a way to deal with the pain and suffering. But they are ultimately ineffective – never free us or really protect us. Serve to separate, alienate, wall off – keeping us ultimately from union with ourselves (our True Self), with God and with others. Keep us from loving and receiving love.

Shields: inner vows, judgments, forgetting, repressing, numbing, splitting off, blaming, controlling, deflecting (criticizing), etc.

Festering wounds: Evil can achieve a foothold and intensify or aggravate the wound.

GOOD NEWS!

Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

In inner healing prayer, we invite Christ to be present to the one who is suffering, inviting him or her (at whatever age or stage, at whatever time in the person’s life), to be open to the healing power and love of Christ in the memory. Christ is present and was present. Opening the eyes of our heart, soul and mind to be aware of his love, we “see” him, we “hear” him, we “interact” with him. (Father, Son, Holy Spirit: Trinity).

Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:18, 19

Stories of inner healing in the Bible: Luke 24:13-35; John 21:15-17

- Place and time (“kairos” – God’s appointed time)
- Listening
- Loving
- Truth
- Transformation
- Call

Fruits:

- Release (body, mind, soul, spirit)
- Forgiveness
- Poison drained
- Wholeness
- Intimacy with God
- Transformation of thoughts, beliefs (new neural pathways)
- Freedom to follow
- Flow of love (in and through) increased

- Evil does not have a foothold, must depart

Best practices:

- Team prayer
- Prepare space
- Always ask permission to touch (head, shoulder)
- LISTEN & Love
- Binding prayer (anything of evil be bound away from person)
- Invite Holy Spirit and wait. Ask what's happening.
- Helpful to begin with a "good" memory; find a place of safety with Christ (Trinity)
- Ask person to invite Christ into memory. Wait. Check in periodically to see what's happening (prayer receivers don't always share freely)
- Renounce/repent inner vows, judgments (if any are revealed)
- Forgiveness (of others, from God)
- Identify untrue beliefs and ask for the Holy Spirit to reveal truth
- At the conclusion, bless what God has done. Seal with oil.
- Give any post-prayer direction or counsel (Scripture, rest, journal, return for more prayer, etc.)
- Team: pray for cleansing and lift person in prayer to God.
- Confidentiality
- Supervision
- Seek ministry if something is stirred in you.

Resources

Norma Dearing, *The Healing Touch: A Guide to Healing Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Chosen), 2002.

Mike Flynn & Doug Gregg, *Inner Healing* (Downers Grove: IVP), 1993.

Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press), 1974, 1999.

Francis & Judith MacNutt, *School of Healing Prayer, Level I*®, Christian Healing Ministries, Jacksonville, FL

David Seamands, *Healing for Damaged Emotions* (CVP, 1991).

David Seamands, *Healing of Memories* (David C. Cook, 1986).